



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

9 OCTOBER 2020

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Los Angeles – More than 1.1 Million Illicit Cannabis Plants Destroyed

(U) California's annual campaign against illegal marijuana cultivation eradicated more than 1.1 million plants at 455 grow sites. The 13-week effort by state, local, and federal agencies in 29 counties continued despite difficulties stemming from COVID-19 precautions and massive wildfires. Because of competition from illicit operators, California's legal marijuana businesses have not been as successful as hoped since the state created a regulated industry in 2018. The Campaign Against Marijuana Planting led to the arrests of 140 people and seizures of 174 weapons. This year's biggest haul – 293,000 plants – occurred in Riverside County. The remaining top five were in the north, Tulare, with more than 105,000 plants, followed by Trinity, Lake, and Siskiyou counties.

SOURCE: 8 October 2020, [AP News](#)

(U) Sacramento – Employee Development Department Freezes Claims to Combat Fraud

(U) The Employee Development Department (EDD) froze nearly 700,000 claims in order to determine which are legitimate and which are not, after discovering that many claims may have been sent in by fraudsters. The EDD Director recently admitted to law makers that the agency is unsure how much money has been paid out in fraud, and only has 27 investigators looking into fraud rings. EDD said its new ID.Me system will be an important first step to combatting the fraud. Regarding the backlog of 1.5 million claims, the agency believes they will likely not get cleared until January 2021.

SOURCE: 8 October 2020, [KCRA](#)

(U) SOUTHWEST BORDER

(U) Texas – US Border Patrol Agents Uncover 13 Immigrants Hidden in a Van

(U) Laredo – Thirteen immigrants were found packed into cardboard boxes in a van in Texas after crossing the border from Mexico. The immigrants were found squashed into the boxes which were sealed with tape at a checkpoint north of Laredo on Interstate 35. During an immigration inspection of the driver and front seat passenger, a sniffer dog alerted Border Patrol officers to the back of the van. Undocumented immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Ecuador were subsequently arrested. A US citizen who was driving the rental van carrying the immigrants is in custody but has not yet been identified.

SOURCE: 8 October 2020, [Daily Mail UK](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) Michigan – 13 Charged in Plots Against Michigan Governor and Police

(U) Lansing – The FBI and Michigan State Police foiled a plot to kidnap Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer in an alleged scheme that involved months of planning and even rehearsals to snatch her from her vacation home. Initially, six men were charged in federal court with conspiring to kidnap the governor before the 3 November elections in reaction to what they viewed as her "uncontrolled power." Separately, seven others linked to a paramilitary group called the Wolverine Watchmen were charged in

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state court for allegedly seeking to storm the Michigan Capitol and seek a “civil war.” The two groups trained together and planned “various acts of violence.”

SOURCE: 8 October 2020, [AP News](#)

(U) Florida – 18 Arrested in Months-Long Drug Bust Operation

(U) Fort Myers – Over the course of seven months the Lee County Sheriff’s Office narcotics team took down multiple drug dealers connected to the Latin King Gang. The operation targeted drug dealers operating south of Fort Myers and Bonita Springs. After officers infiltrated the organization, they began seizing illegal narcotics such as methamphetamine, heroin, and crack cocaine. Law enforcement officers were able to arrest 18 people, many of whom face charges for selling or buying drugs. Four others remain fugitives.

SOURCE: 8 October 2020, [Wink News](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Australia – US-Inspired Right-Wing Extremism a Large Threat to Australia, Study Finds

(U) Victoria – Right-wing extremism poses a threat to liberal democracy in Australia, according to a new study that investigates how extremists are using online networks to spread radical narratives. The study, which focuses mainly on New South Wales (NSW) because it was funded by the state government, identified networks involving mostly male and under-35 users who were attracted to “the theme of white identity under threat.” The research examined 30 Australian right-wing extremist group pages on Facebook and 37,422 tweets from 3,321 users identified as being in NSW on Twitter. It also examined archived message boards focused on NSW and Australian issues on Reddit, 4chan, and 8chan, and Gab. The report indicated most right-wing extremist groups that had formed over the past decade had done so in Victoria, and many had associated groups in NSW and maintained an online presence.

SOURCE: 8 October 2020, [The Guardian](#)

(U) Germany – 188 Anti-Muslim Attacks Recorded in Germany in Three Months

(U) Berlin – German police recorded 188 anti-Muslim hate crimes in the second quarter of this year. At least 15 mosques were attacked between April and June of 2020, and dozens of Muslims were physically assaulted or verbally harassed on the street or in a public place. Nine Muslims were injured in these attacks. Germany has witnessed growing racism and Islamophobia in recent years, fueled by the propaganda of neo-Nazi groups and the far-right opposition Alternative for Germany party. Germany is home to 81 million people and the second-largest Muslim population in Western Europe after France.

SOURCE: 9 October 2020, [Daily Sabah](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

(U) FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE EMAIL STAC@CALOES.CA.GOV, OR CALL 916-636-2900.

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